



Retrospective Planning Statement

Site Address: 2 Schwabe Street, Rochdale

Proposal: Retention of low-level residential structure replacing former dilapidated garage

Applicant: Mr Ade Perryman

Local Planning Authority: Rochdale Borough Council

1. Introduction

This retrospective planning application seeks approval for the retention of a low-height residential structure constructed on land at Schwabe Street, Rochdale. The building replaces a long-standing, dilapidated garage that had become structurally unsound, visually harmful, and no longer fit for purpose.

The new structure has been designed to remain modest in scale, subordinate to surrounding dwellings, and fully compatible with the established residential character of the area. It provides essential accommodation in the future for a family and ensures the continued, productive use of previously developed land.

2. Site Context and Existing Use

The site lies within a mature residential neighbourhood characterised by terraced and semi-detached homes. The former garage had deteriorated significantly, contributing negatively to the street scene and offering no meaningful use.

The replacement structure sits within the same site footprint and maintains the established pattern of built form. It does not introduce new access points, does not intensify traffic, and does not alter the residential character of Schwabe Street.

3. Relevant Planning Policy Framework

The proposal has been assessed against the current and emerging planning framework for Rochdale, including:

- **Rochdale Local Plan (Core Strategy and saved UDP policies)** – guiding development, design quality, land use, and sustainable communities.
- **Draft Rochdale Local Plan (2024–2026 consultation)** – setting out future policy direction for sustainable, inclusive growth and efficient land use.
- **Greater Manchester strategic planning context (Places for Everyone)** – supporting housing delivery and sustainable neighbourhoods.
- **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)** – presumption in favour of sustainable development and efficient use of previously developed land.
- **Rochdale Housing Allocation Policy & Integrated Assessment** – identifying housing pressures, need for varied accommodation, and the importance of preventing homelessness.

The retention of the building aligns with these policy objectives.

4. Housing Need, Land Efficiency, and Policy Alignment

Rochdale's housing evidence identifies several key pressures:

- Increasing population and ageing demographics.
- Shortage of appropriately sized and affordable homes.
- Overcrowding and insufficient supply of suitable accommodation.
- Need to maximise use of existing housing stock and previously developed land.

Although the structure is not a new dwelling in the traditional sense, its retention directly supports these objectives by:

- Providing essential accommodation for a future household.
- Preventing the unnecessary loss of a functional, regulation-compliant home.
- Making efficient use of land already in residential ancillary use.
- Avoiding additional pressure on the borough's housing services.

This is fully consistent with the borough's strategic approach to sustainable communities and land optimisation.

5. Continued Need for the Building

The structure can provide vital accommodation for a family when needed as elderly family members did once stay there before they passed away. Its removal would reduce a building that could be used as a home and keep a family household on the homelessness list.

Rochdale's Housing Allocation Policy prioritises:

- Preventing homelessness.
- Maintaining stable communities.
- Maximising the use of existing housing stock.

Removing a safe, compliant home would contradict these priorities and create avoidable strain on the Council's housing services.

6. Importance of Maintaining Family Homes

Family stability is central to Rochdale's planning and housing objectives. The borough's evidence base highlights the need to retain and support existing homes to meet local demand.

Retaining this structure:

- Ensures future list as a home for a settled family.
- Supports community cohesion and neighbourhood stability.
- Avoids unnecessary displacement and disruption.
- Maintains accommodation that is already meeting an identified local need.

The building therefore plays a meaningful role in supporting the borough's wider housing strategy.



7. Consequences of Removal

If the structure were required to be demolished:

- Displaced users of the building.
- The Council would be required to intervene under statutory duties.
- Pressure on temporary accommodation / facilities and housing services would increase.
- A safe, regulation-compliant home would be lost without planning benefit.

Such an outcome would be inconsistent with both local and national policy objectives.

8. Compliance With Building Regulations

The structure has been built to modern building regulation standards, ensuring:

- Structural integrity and long-term durability.
- Safe electrical and drainage installations.
- Adequate ventilation and thermal performance.
- Compliance with fire safety requirements.

This represents a significant improvement over the former garage, which had no modern safety features and had become a liability to the site and surrounding area.

9. Design, Scale, and Visual Impact

The building is intentionally low-level and modest in height, ensuring it remains unobtrusive and subordinate to surrounding properties.

Key design benefits include:

- No overshadowing or overbearing impact.
- No overlooking or loss of privacy.
- Improved visual appearance compared with the former garage.
- Materials and form that complement the local character.

The development therefore complies with local design policies requiring proposals to respect scale, context, and neighbourhood character.

10. Neighbour and Community Support

Feedback from neighbours and the wider community has been positive. Residents value:

- The removal of the dilapidated garage.
- The improved appearance of the site.
- The stability provided by retaining a building that can be used as by a family within the neighbourhood.
- The absence of any adverse amenity impacts.

This reinforces the proposal's alignment with Rochdale's aim to support cohesive, attractive, and sustainable communities.



11. Sustainable Development and Continued Use of Land

The retention of the building supports sustainable development principles by:

- Making efficient use of previously developed land.
- Avoiding unnecessary demolition and waste.
- Providing long-term, safe accommodation.
- Enhancing the environmental quality of the site.

This is fully consistent with the NPPF and Rochdale's strategic planning objectives.

12. Conclusion

The retrospective development represents a clear improvement over the former garage and provides a building that can be used as accommodation. Its retention:

- Supports Rochdale's housing priorities and prevents avoidable displacement
- Aligns with the Local Plan, emerging policies, and national planning principles.
- Enhances the character and appearance of Schwabe Street.
- Protects residential amenity and community cohesion.
- Makes efficient, sustainable use of existing residential land.

For these reasons, the proposal is fully compliant with relevant planning policies and is respectfully submitted for approval.